

TIME TO QUIT FEEDING THE ANIMAL



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The World's Peace

(An anniversary address, by Charles A. Douglas, delivered at Erskine College, Due West, S. C., June 7, 1921.)

Mr. President, Gentlemen of the Faculty, Students and Friends of Erskine:

Here again! Since first I saw these classic groves a third of a century has come and gone. In this presence I forget the stirring years of a busy life and I am once more a laughing, careless, lazy boy, reaping where I did not sow. Standing here, and in great awe, I see again the Griens and the Pressleys, and the Pattons and the Lowrys, the Bonners and the Kennedys, and then I stroll and play, and sometimes work and sometimes pray, but all the while I dream of life and its fond hopes—Ave! Alma Mater immortalis!

Those of us who were privileged to drink of the waters of her immortal life—for all things good are truly immortal—would fain come back and drink once more at her fountain of youth and make our aspirations young again. Vexed with life's problems and storm-tossed in midocean, we sometimes wish that we could turn our frail barks shoreward again and back to this sacred spot, and here, in these quiet shades, dream on and on. But that cannot, should not, be. Great duties are ours, with others, to be discharged. The world's problems are ours, with others, to be solved. At no time in history has the world more sorely needed men—aye, and women, too—for this age-worn, war-racked world is standing neck-deep in the ashes of poverty, crying peace, peace!

May I, therefore, talk to you, then, on that foremost of all the subjects—

THE WORLD'S PEACE

We of this generation have read of war and thought we knew its horrors; but, now that we have lived it, we know it as it truly is. Stripped of its glamour and with the music of its tocsin heard no more, it is hell incarnate! It is assault and battery; it is mayhem; it is murder en masse! It is the brute, not the man, the physical, not the intellectual, the

wrong, not the right, the Devil, not God, that rule and reign, when the world lets slip the dogs of war. It insures the survival of the unfittest in the struggle for existence. It puts premium on unfitness and a penalty on fitness, a premium on cowardice and a penalty on courage. It destroys the big and the good and the brave and the strong and leaves the small and the bad and the cowardly and the weak to people the earth. Biologists say that the men of France of today are two inches shorter because of the Napoleonic wars of a hundred years ago. What is true of individuals is true of nations and of races.

The great nations and brave races of the long ago, but for war, would be the masters of the world's destiny today. The World War, just ended, if it is really ended, cost the world in money, away and apart from the property destroyed and business annihilated, upward of two hundred billion dollars. It slaughtered over ten million men of the white races of the world and it made halt, blind, and maimed more than twenty million of the flower of the youth of the human race. And what was right before this fearful sacrifice is right now, and what was wrong before is wrong still.

Eagerly and fervently did we fight to save the world for democracy, and with the Crusaders' intrepid courage we carried to the cannon's mouth our battle-cry—"War to end war!"

One of the fourteen articles of the Armistice's terms, accepted and approved by all the nations engaged in the war, declared that "a general association of nations must be formed under specific covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guaranties of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike." With a firm fidelity, the allied nations kept the faith and discharged the duty this article imposed. They wrote the Treaty of Versailles and read into it the covenant of the League of Nations. The treaty set out the terms of peace. The League of Nations was constituted the executor of the treaty. It was, besides, the treaty-makers' purpose that the league should be, in a sense,

a continuing court of equity, to sit in judgment on the peace itself, to revise its terms when revision became necessary, and to readjust the provisions of the treaty to a calmer and saner state of the public mind, and, in fine, to so function, now and hereafter, as to give to the world an enduring peace. The task of readjustments and reparations, of making world peace and then of securing it, was the greatest that had ever confronted peace commissioners since history began. It took more than a half year to complete it. It was signed by the representatives of more than twenty nations. It was the first concrete effort to bring the governments of the world into effective concert to preserve the peace.

The fundamental thought of the covenant of the league was the substitution of the instrumentalities of peace for the instrumentalities of war. Generally, it declared for co-operation, instead of competition, in international affairs.

Competition to excel in all the things that are good and true and right is the greatest force in the moral and spiritual life of the race. Competition in all things that make for the material betterment of life, whether they are social and political or commercial and industrial, is the most potent factor in the march of civilization. But competition in building for the military offensive, under the guise of the military defensive, is supremely and eternally wrong. From time whereof the memory of man runneth not to the contrary, all the nations, great and small, have striven to make themselves more powerful than their neighbors, and all for war.

During the World War we called it militarism. We called it German militarism because the damnable policy was more pronounced and more accentuated, more extensive and more offensive there than elsewhere, but it was in a measure everywhere, and we did then highly resolve that we would crush the monster, and we fought the World War to end all war.

We have crushed militarism in Germany—maybe for all time and maybe not—but we should set our own military houses in order. The militarism of England, and of France, and of Italy, and of Japan, and of the United States should be crushed by the same fair, fierce hand that crushed it in Germany.

The covenant of the league provides for—requires—reduction of armament—that is to say, disarmament. Whether the league lives or dies, the plaintive, yet defiant, cry for disarmament is heard today around the world.

The proposal that the United States and England and Japan now agree on a plan of immediate and substantial armament reduction remains unacted on. The naval program for this year of these three nations involves an excess expenditure of over one billion dollars. Armament is a provocative of war and a relentless foe of peace. It makes poverty, destroys wealth, paralyzes industry, and crushes the initiative and spirit of a people. No one says a good word for war. No one wants the tax burdens of armament. Yet the world goes on arming. War is the subject of man's violation. It is he who makes war; it is he who can stop war.

We have passed through a world carnival of hate and destruction. Its bitter path is strewn with moral, spiritual, intellectual, political, and social wreckage. It is high time for the healing. Hate has not healed anything since time began.

And then the league covenants for the orderly processes of law in the settlement of quarrels between nations. It provides for mediation and

arbitration, and finally for a great International Supreme Court for the adjudication of international controversies. Perhaps, as its provisions are now written, the quarreling nations cannot be required, but only requested, to submit to the jurisdiction of the courts of the league. If so, the covenant should be amended and all the nations placed under the binding and enforceable rules of international law in all purely international affairs.

A covenant such as this will ultimately and surely bring into being a real codified system of international law and place the states of the world under the reign and rule of law. It is so today, and has always been, that every nation is above the law and free to attack, despoil, and destroy other nations, limited only by its scant conscience and the quantum of its physical power. The nations of the world from time immemorial have been for war; with but few exceptions, all their quarrels have been settled that way. Surely no more destructive method of effecting international settlements could have been conceived by the mind of man. The method breeds disease, disorder, demoralization, destruction, and death. Notwithstanding the price of it, it settles nothing when it is done. It does not ascertain the truth. It does not administer justice. It does not secure the right. Our ancestors, perhaps a little bit more barbarous than we, were won't to settle controversies between individuals by wager of battle. Vainly they thought then concerning individuals what the nations think now concerning themselves, that the way to the truth and right and justice of a quarrel was to choose the weapon of the strong arm instead of the weapon of righteousness. They stupidly thought then as we criminally think now, that the sword is mightier than the pen! Citizens of the state are subject to the rule of law. The formulation and announcement of this fundamental principle marked, thousands of years ago, the commencement of civilized government. The application of this indispensable first principle to the conduct of nations in their relations to one another is the first essential in any sane and organized effort to make sure and permanent the peace of the world. Without it there can be imposed no restraint, and without effective restraint there can be no hope of a lasting peace.

And the covenant of the league invokes the boycott—moral and intellectual, industrial and commercial—less powerful and effective, perhaps, than military force, but nevertheless withering and blighting in its power, for, what nation, however great, the United States or England, if you please, can withstand the combined thought and judgment and action of the rest of the world?

And, again, the league makes a binding provision for "cooling time." The member nations solemnly covenant to submit the merits of their complaint not to the moral judgment of the league alone, but of mankind. The case of the complaining nation must be made up and stated, and then published to the nations everywhere, that the merits may be known, and then a wait of six months for the good offices of the league in the interest of a just settlement, and then a further wait of three months before there can be a resort to war. War comes when the blood is at white heat. When it is cool, the heart waits on the judgment. This is everywhere conceded to be one of the surest guaranties of peace. Mr. Bryan was the first statesman that invoked and employed it. He wrote it into treaties between the United States and thirty other na-